

Amendments to the Claims

Kindly amend claims 1-13 & 15 as set forth below. In accordance with current amendment practice, all pending claims are reproduced below. Changes in the amended claims are shown by underlining (for added matter) and strikethrough/double brackets (for deleted matter).

1. (Currently Amended) Method for handling E-mail messages in a communication system comprising one or several intermediate receivers ~~(102)~~, each serving at least one recipient, the method comprising:

detaching, in ~~the~~ an intermediate receiver ~~(102)~~, ~~any~~ an attachment ~~(300)~~ in an E-mail message and ~~storing~~ creating an attachment ID for the attachment employing at least one attribute of the attachment[[.]]:

referencing an attachment database to determine whether an existing attachment database document has a same attachment ID, and if not, creating a new attachment database document in the attachment database, the new attachment database document including the attachment ID and the e-mail message attachment;

authorizing intended recipients of the e-mail message to access the new attachment database document;

replacing each the attachment in the E-mail message ~~(10)~~ with a reference ~~(400)~~ to the ~~stored~~ new attachment database document[[.]]; and

forwarding the E-mail message ~~(10)~~ with the reference ~~(400)~~ from the intermediate receiver ~~(102)~~ to ~~the~~ each authorized recipient specified in the E-mail message ~~(10)~~, wherein only authorized recipients have access to the new attachment database document in the attachment database.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~detaching~~ comprises:

~~copying the at least one attachment (300) to an attachment database (105)~~
is accessible to all intermediate receivers (102) at a receiving side (100).

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

defining authorization access conditions such that the ~~stored~~ new
attachment database document (300) is ~~accessible~~ accessible only by for each
authorized recipient of the ~~according~~ reference (400).

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the attachment is replaced
with multiple references to multiple versions of the attachment in the attachment database.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

upon an ~~according~~ authorized request of ~~the~~ a recipient, transferring the
stored attachment database document to the recipient.

6. (Currently Amended) System for handling E-mail messages in a communication
system, comprising one or more intermediate receivers (102), each serving at least one recipient,
the intermediate receiver (102) comprising an attachment handling device (104) adapted for

detaching any an attachment (300) in an E-mail message (10) and storing
creating an attachment ID for the attachment (300)[[,]]employing at least one
attribute of the attachment;

referencing an attachment database to determine whether an existing
attachment database document has a same attachment ID, and if not, creating a
new attachment database document in the attachment database, the new
attachment database document including the attachment ID and the e-mail
message attachment;

authorizing intended recipients of the e-mail message to access the new attachment database document;

replacing ~~each~~ the attachment (300) in the E-mail message (10) with a reference (400) to the stored new attachment database document[[,]]; and

forwarding the E-mail message (10) with the reference (400) from the intermediate receiver (102) to ~~the~~ each authorized recipient specified in the E-mail message (10), wherein only authorized recipients have access to the new attachment database document in the attachment database.

7. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 6, ~~further comprising a first wherein~~ the attachment database (105) is accessible to all intermediate receivers (102) at a receiving side (100) and connectable to the attachment handling device (104).

8. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 7, wherein the ~~first~~ attachment database (105) is located at the intermediate receiver (102).

9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 7, further comprising for at least one of the recipients an attachment copy ~~device~~ agent (111) adapted for transferring the stored new attachment database document from the ~~first~~ attachment database (105) to the recipient.

10. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 7, further comprising a ~~second~~ local attachment database (112) connectable to the attachment copy ~~device~~ agent (111).

11. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 6, wherein the intermediate receiver (102) is a server in a client-server architecture, serving at least one recipient's client (110).

12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein the ~~second~~ local attachment database (112) is located at the recipient's client (110).

13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~second~~ local attachment database (112) is located at the recipient's client (110).

14. (Original) Computer program product directly loadable into the internal memory of a computer, comprising software code portions for performing the steps of claim 1 when said product is run on a computer.

15. (Currently Amended) Computer system comprising an internal memory, wherein the computer program product of claim 14 is loaded, and an execution environment for executing a method of handling E-mail messages in a communication system comprising one or several intermediate receivers (102), each serving at least one recipient, the method comprising:

detaching, in the ~~an~~ intermediate receiver (102), ~~any an~~ attachment (300), in an E-mail message and ~~storing~~ creating an attachment ID for the attachment[[,]]employing at least one attribute of the attachment;

referencing an attachment database to determine whether an existing attachment database document has a same attachment ID, and if not, creating a new attachment database document in the attachment database, the new attachment database document including the attachment ID and the e-mail message attachment;

authorizing intended recipients of the e-mail message to access the new attachment database document;

replacing ~~each~~ the attachment in the E-mail message (10) with a reference (400) to the ~~stored~~ new attachment database document[[,]]; and

forwarding the E-mail message (10) with the reference (400) from the intermediate receiver (102) to ~~the~~ each authorized recipient specified in the E-mail message (10), wherein only authorized recipients have access to the new attachment database document in the attachment database.

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